

Tikvah Talk December 2008  
Rabbi Amy Joy Small

### Coping with Loss, Fear and Worry during a Difficult Time

“Happy are they who dwell within your house, may they continue to give praise to you. Happy is the people for whom life is thus, happy is the people with THE EVERLASTING for its God!” *Psalm 145:1*

We are living through some extraordinarily challenges times. The upheaval on Wall Street and the mortgage meltdown are just beginning to affect us. Some of us have already been hit hard, losing savings or jobs. Others live with worry of imminent job loss. Others of us have worries about our economic future and all us are left wondering what will change in our country, our communities and our families. Change is always difficult, and this series of changes is certain to be traumatic for some of us. Let us remember that we are all in this together and we are here for each other.

Difficult times can test the strength of a community – and I am confident that our strength as a caring community can certainly help all of us to be strengthened and comforted during this difficult time. Here at CBH, we are in the process of setting up a dialogue forum for our members to come and talk about their losses, their fears and their struggles and to include prayers and songs for healing. In addition, I am working with some therapists in our community who have offered to be a part of setting up one or more support groups within our community to provide confidential, small-group safe spaces for those who feel they need to have ongoing support during this time. Please keep an eye out for our forthcoming announcements about these programs and don't hesitate to call me if you have questions or requests in the meantime.

We are all here for each other -- please let me know if there is any support or help you need. And let's also be sure to reach out to one another. We can make such a difference in each other lives simply by reaching out to care for another.

When this help is not enough, there are several places to which you can turn to receive support from the Metrowest Jewish community. We have available copies of a brochure “**Keshet, UJC and Synagogues Connected**” – if you can't locate one on our bulletin board, let me know so I can get it for you. It includes a listing of resources for helping people in crisis. UJC board president Gary Aidekman has said,

“Our Metrowest partner agencies are fully aware of the increased needs and are ready to help those who are severely affected by this current economic downturn. UJC Metrowest is working closely with our agencies to respond to the most urgent needs within our community.”

Services of our Metrowest community include:

**The Jewish Resource Line** (973.929.3100.) is a centralized information and referral service providing health, educational, vocational, and social services offered by our Jewish community.

**Jewish Family Service** (973.765.9050) provides counseling for individuals, couples and families and can be helpful in a variety of ways for families in financial distress.

**Jewish Vocational Service** (973.674.6330) provides support services and counseling for the unemployed and underemployed.

**Hebrew Free Loan** (973.765.9050) provides interest-free loans to Jews with no place else to turn. Loans are provided for all types of circumstances.

**Rachel Coalition** (973.740.1233) provides support for victims of domestic violence. It provides a 24-hour crisis response line, Emergency Safe House, individual and group counseling and medical and legal support.

The end is not yet in sight and the depth and breath of this crisis is still unfolding—but this we know – our country, our people and indeed some of us as individuals have been through very difficult times before, and we have emerged strengthened and wiser for it. As King Solomon taught, “This too shall pass.” But in the meantime, the way that it passes is really up to us – let us not isolate ourselves in despair but turn to one another in common purpose.

Finally, why did I select the opening of Psalm 145 for the introduction for this column? It is my prayer that this challenging and difficult time will bring us closer yet again to one another and to spiritual community. With a shifted sense of perspective, may we renew our connections to our people. May we be the hands of God, surrounding each other in loving embrace, And may we emerge ultimately happy and satisfied with what is most important – the precious gifts of life, love and each other!